

Political geography



The **United Kingdom** is made up of four **countries**: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK is a unitary sovereign state, but Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have a certain degree of autonomy after the process of devolution. The UK Parliament and British government deal with general matters concerning England and reserved matters concerning the other countries. General matters are dealt respectively by the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales. The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are dependencies of the Crown and are not part of the UK. Similarly, the British overseas territories, remnants of the British Empire, are not part of the UK.

There are five types of local authority in England: county councils, district councils, unitary authorities, metropolitan districts and London boroughs.

County councils cover the whole of the county and provide the majority of public services in their particular area. Each county is divided into several districts. **District councils**, which may also be called borough councils or city councils if the district has borough or city status, cover a much smaller area and provide more local services. City councils are mainly responsible for education, social care and transport, while the districts care for housing, leisure, and the environment. Many large towns and cities, and some small counties are **unitary authorities**, i.e. they have only one level of local government. **Metropolitan districts** are similar to unitary authorities and include big cities and their surroundings. Each **London borough** is a unitary authority. However, the **Greater London Authority (GLA)** provides London-wide government and shares responsibility for certain services.

Some parts of England have a third level of local government. **Town and parish councils** are responsible for smaller local services.

In both Wales and Scotland there is a single level of local government providing all local government services. In Northern Ireland there are elected local boroughs, city and district councils.

The capital of England and the UK is London, while in Scotland it is Edinburgh, Cardiff in Wales and Belfast in Northern Ireland.



The **United States of America**, usually referred to as the United States, or America, are made up of 50 states, a federal district, and five territories. The **states** are divided into **counties**, apart from Louisiana – which uses the word *parish* – and Alaska – which uses the word *borough*. The United States also consist of several other lands that are not states. Most of these are **colonial territories**, and none is on the North American continent. Some examples are: Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, US Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana Islands. The United States also includes one **federal district** that was split from a state: Washington, D.C., the capital.

The states can be grouped as follows:

Pacific: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

Mountain: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming

West North Central: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota

West South Central: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

East South Central: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee

East North Central: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin

South Atlantic: Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia

Middle Atlantic: New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania

New England: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont.

The largest city is New York. Other major US cities include Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, Miami, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Houston, Philadelphia, Boston, Denver, St. Louis, Dallas, and Pittsburgh. The two largest metropolitan areas are along the Atlantic Coast and on the Pacific Coast in California. These urban areas have become large conurbations called megalopolis. Boswash is a megalopolis whose major cities are Boston, New York, Washington and Philadelphia. Sansan extends from San Francisco to San Diego and includes Los Angeles. Another one is Chipitts in the areas around the Great Lakes. It includes Chicago and Pittsburg.



1 Surf the Net to find information to complete the table about the UK countries.

| | England | Scotland | Wales | Northern Ireland |
|--------------|---------|----------|-------|------------------|
| Capital | | | | |
| Language | | | | |
| Symbols | | | | |
| Patron Saint | | | | |
| Major cities | | | | |



2 Watch this video on the top 10 attractions in London and complete the table. First, write the name of the attractions, then watch again and complete the table with what you can see or do.

▶ [Top 10 Attractions London - UK travel guide posted by geobeats](#)

| | Tourist attraction | What to see or do |
|----|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |
| 10 | | |



3 Read this text and answer the questions.

ONE DAY NEW YORK TOUR - 6 HOURS



If you're looking for an immersive half-day experience of New York City in a small-group setting led by a local guide who knows just where to go, One Day New York City Tours – which are limited to only 15 people per tour – has you covered.

Departing daily at 9:30am from Father Duffy Square, the six-hour tour opens with a history lesson about Times Square, from the days when it was a traditional market to the present day, when it's become one of the most famous intersections in the world. Next (and next door) is the New York Theater District, followed by 30, Rockefeller Center, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the New York Public Library, the Chrysler Building and Grand Central Terminal, where the group takes a rest

and grabs a bite for lunch.

After lunch, it's a hop on the subway like a real New Yorker to take a trip to Wall Street, where tour-goers can rub the nose of the Wall Street bull before heading down to Battery Park to travel on the Staten Island Ferry for a picture-perfect view of the Statue of Liberty. The tour ends at the 9/11 Memorial; the guide can provide directions back to Times Square or other destinations if needed.

Note that the transportation fee is not included on the tour. Guests are expected to purchase a \$10 Metrocard.

From: <http://www.newyork.com/tours/one-day-nyc-tour-six-hours/>



1. Where does the tour start?
2. Where does it stop?
3. What are the main sites that you can visit on this tour?
4. Where can you have lunch?
5. Are transportation fees included? What are visitors expected to do?